

ACTION MINUTES
LYNNWOOD TOURISM ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Annex Conference Room
December 12, 2013
7:45 AM

10. Call to Order

Chairperson Smith called the meeting to order at 7:51 a.m.

20. Roll Call

Committee Members present:

Chairperson Smith
Committee Member Horrigan
Committee Member Klein
Committee Member Dull

Staff:

Mary Monroe, Tourism Manager
David Kleitsch, Economic Development Director
Christy Murray, Administrative Assistant

Committee Members absent:

Committee Member Spain
Committee Member Walker
Committee Member Mueller

30. Approval of Minutes

30.1 Minutes of August 8, 2013:

Committee Chair Smith moved to approve the minutes of August 8, 2013.
Committee Member Horrigan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

40. Written Communications

None

50. Public Comments

None

60. Reports from Committee Members

60.1 Committee Member Klein reported that everything is going very well at Alderwood Mall. Black Friday sales were equal to or better than prior years for all retailers. For the first time, the mall opened at 8:00 PM on Thanksgiving Day and it was very successful. Committee Chair Smith inquired about the effect of increasing online sales on Alderwood Mall brick and mortar sales. Committee Member Klein stated that online sales will continue to grow, but many shoppers prefer brick and mortar shopping and that overall sales are strong.

Committee Member Dull reported that October was the best month the Convention Center has ever seen. They are expecting the Convention

Center to be profitable by the end of the 2013, excluding debt obligations. He explained that the expected profitability for 2013 was the result of many factors which included budgeting for contingencies and repairs, which are added to the bottom line if not needed. There were also salary savings due vacancies in staff during the first half of the year.

Committee Member Horrigan reported that August was the best month the Embassy Suites has ever seen and the hotel is expected to have record breaking sales in 2013. Committee Member Horrigan also reported that the Embassy Suites was sold as part of an eight hotel portfolio to AWH Partners, which owns the hotel management group Spire Hospitality. She is very positive about the sale and the new management group and is not expecting any staff changes. An extensive interior and exterior renovation is tentatively scheduled for the fourth quarter of 2014 and will include updating the meeting space at the hotel.

70. Resolutions and Action Items

None

80. Staff Reports

80.1 Tourism Work Program Update

Tourism Manager Monroe announced that Lodging Tax revenues in October were the highest ever received. The additional revenue is being invested in tourism marketing and spending as outlined in the work program. She is exploring additional opportunities to reach out to the student and youth market. Tourism Manager Monroe recently attended the Canadian Inbound Tourism Association - Asia Pacific (CITAP) conference in Vancouver Canada with Committee Member Spain. They made contact with tour operators with strong connections to Asia. Many groups from Japan and China depart from Seattle. Crossing the border the day before departure reduces the stress of making flights due to border delays. This provides an opportunity to overnight in Lynnwood and to take advantage of area attractions.

Tourism Manager Monroe explained that she is attempting to develop a method of effectively tracking the impact of media placement. Specifically, media that is most effective in bringing actual visitors to Lynnwood. An inquiry database is being created to track conversions as we move forward.

Creation of a pocket sized tourism brochure will be discussed with the designer in 2014. The redesigned tourism brochure has been well received.

Tourism Manager Monroe shared that the winners of the Groups Today Reader's Choice awards included Washington State as the Western Destination Choice Award.

80.2 Tourism Website Update

Tourism Manager Monroe reported Blizzard Internet Marketing has been selected to review, enhance and improve the City's Tourism website. She explained that the tourism website is currently being updated. The redesigned website was presented and committee feedback was requested. Discussion ensued on the website update and feedback was generally good. Committee Member Dull stated the link to the "Meet Here" section of the website should be very prominent. He added the Convention Center has been focusing on larger groups this year and it has been very good for sales. He also stated the importance of pages being easily read on mobile devices. Committee Member Klein stated she liked the icons on the main navigation bar and suggested less text and more images on child/content pages. She will be providing a PDF of the Alderwood Mall brochure to be added to the Tourism website.

80.3 Director's Report

Director Kleitsch reported that all members of the TAC / LTAC had been reappointed. The new Committee Chair will be selected by City Council in January 2014. Subsequent to the selection of the Committee Chair, the next TAC / LTAC meeting is scheduled for February 13, 2014.

Director Kleitsch stated that Tourism Manager Monroe is focusing on Canadian leisure travelers and attended the CITAP Conference with Committee Member Spain.

90. General Discussion

Committee Members thanked Councilmember Smith for his service as Chair of the TAC / LTAC.

100. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:59 AM

Next Meeting

The next TAC meeting is scheduled for February 13, 2014.